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ment of their disputes. The kings were often elected by the nobles from amongst their own number either for life or as hereditary princes. A king once elected therefore felt that his power was in continual danger from the ambitious schemes of his nobles; and it became his interest to thwart these by encouraging them in continual strife when not actually occupied in a foreign war. It could not fail to occur in a country where physical power is the arbiter of every difference and brute force the medium of last resort, that the weak and the lowly should be oppressed.

Although this state of things endangered the lives and property of all, and every man had to live continually fortified against the encroachments of his neighbor, none suffered so much as the unfortunate Van-to-hi-los. They were not allowed to join military organizations, nor to own or work any lands; merely allowed to exist, and to derive their support from trades, commercial and other pursuits, which could be carried on without the possession of real property, every opportunity was seized (and in the absence of these, opportunities were created) to fall upon and kill them in order to rob them of their possessions.

Religious zeal was made the pretext of these depredations. They rejected the religion of Ty-Tyng-fo; they or their forefathers, had ungratefully murdered him when he offered them noble principles in exchange for their ceremonial religion; their souls were doomed to eternal suffering, and it was but carrying out divine judgment to kill their bodies in order to send them to their account as early as possible.

Besides all this, their possessions were in their houses and about their persons; they had nothing but what could be turned to immediate use by pious Tyngos, and it had better be so appropriated than minister to the comfort of the infidel Van-to-hi-los. Furthermore, they were not a fighting people; they rarely defended themselves, nor could they, for they nowhere existed in numbers sufficiently large to resist their oppressors. Victory was as sure as it was easy and profitable, and had it not been for their usefulness in trades and the arts and sciences, there is no doubt that that unfortunate nation would have been swept from the face of the earth. As it was, they were driven from one country to another, and wherever they existed, they enjoyed that privilege only by sufferance and not by right of possession.

FATHER DIEGO DE STELLA says "that the beginning of all our misery was Eve's curious disputing about the commandment of God. If she had been obedient, she would have replied to Satan, when he asked her why God did forbid her to eat, that the authority of God was sufficient for her; but because she went about to dispute the matter at large, and to exercise her private judgment, she utterly undid herself."

It is a great sign of mediocrity always to praise moderately.—*Vauvenargues*.

GREAT men, in teaching little ones to reflect, have set them on the path to error.—*Vauvenargues*.

WAX PAINTING, OR ENCAUSTIC.

THE explanations given of the ancient wax painting are almost inextricably confused and contradictory. There appears to have been three distinct methods, so entirely dissimilar that we shall best avoid confusion by describing them, according to the best authorities, separately.

Of the art of using colors prepared with wax, and of fixing pictures so executed by the aid of fire, the application of the term "encaustic," which strictly means "burning in," is scarcely sufficiently descriptive. Yet, in whatever operations wax was subjected to the action of heat, the process appears to have been considered by the ancients a species of encaustic. Polishing walls, for example, was denominated *kausis*, and the varnishers of statues were called *encaustai*. After the later Pagan painters, the prevalence of encaustic painting among the Christian artists led to the gradual application of the term to all kinds of painting; and even when it was superseded by mosaic, and the process itself scarcely survived, the term was still applied to other modes of painting. In illuminating, for example, the purple and vermilion used for the imperial signatures, and in calligraphy, received the name of "encaustic." Later the more ordinary materials of writing were called by the mediæval writers "incaustum;" and this has finally degenerated into the "inchiostro" of the Italians, and the English "ink."

According to Pliny* "there were originally two modes of painting in encaustic, the one with wax, the other on ivory, by means of the *cestrum*, or graver, till ships began to be painted. This was the third mode introduced, and in this the brush was used, the wax [colors] being dissolved by fire." As the brush is only mentioned in the last, it is evident that in the two former modes a metal instrument was employed.

In the first mode, then, we find that a heated metal instrument called the *rhabdion* (which might have varied in shape, as brushes do now) or *cestrum* (for the terms are employed sometimes indiscriminately), was used to blend the tints. The variously colored wax pigments were prepared in cakes or sticks, like colored crayons in the present day. The *rhabdion* was used much in the same way as Turner and other painters have dexterously handled the palette-knife, drawing with the point and regulating the *impasto*, or body of color, with the side of the instrument. The process was elaborate: hence it was only suited for works of limited dimensions, and its difficulty probably contributed to give the small encaustic pictures of Pausias, executed in this style, their proverbial value in the eyes of rich Roman collectors.

In the second method, the metal point, *cestrum*,† or *virculum*, as it was otherwise called, was used; but for the purpose of actually engraving by means of encaustic outlines on ivory and other substances. Sir Charles Eastlake, however—whose descrip-

* To Pliny alone, among the ancient writers, are we indebted for a connected and critical history of the fine arts. This is contained in the 34th, 35th, and 36th books of his *Natural History*. Pausanias relates numerous facts and particulars respecting the fine arts and the ancient artists, in his account of the statues, pictures, and temples of Greece, but he does not furnish any connected notices.

† The *cestrum* was a pointed graver: but it must have been formed like the stylus, flat at one end and sharp at the other; since designs in wax executed with the point could only have resembled the *sgrofili* (of the Italians) on ivory; and there can be no doubt that the early wax pictures were much more finished.—EASTLAKE, *Materials*, etc., p. 149

tions of the different styles of encaustic painting are the best with which we are acquainted—thinks that even in this instance the word encaustic need not be taken literally, since forms burnt on ivory could not have been very delicate works of art. It may rather be supposed that the outlines were first drawn on waxed ivory, for the facility of correcting them when necessary; that they were afterwards engraved like a seal, in a sort of intaglio in the substance; and that the finished and shadowed design was filled in with one or more colors; being ultimately covered with a wax varnish by the aid of heat. Works so produced must have resembled the *nielli*, or on a small scale the *graffetti*, of the Italians.

The third style was termed *pencillum* encaustic, because brushes were substituted for the metal point. The colors were kept in pots mixed with wax, and the wax was dissolved previous to painting, sufficiently to render the pigments fit to be applied with the brush. The wax crayons or cakes may also possibly have been used. But the chief characteristic of this third method was the use of the *cauterium*. This instrument was a pan of live coals or some kind of charcoal heater. When the picture was in other respects finished, the cauterium was held before it till "the colors frothed," and this regulated fusion united the whole surface.*

It was the generally practised wax painting of the later Pagans and early Christians, and is the chief authorization of the term encaustic. This style somewhat resembled the first. The artists painted on wood (larch being preferred for all pictures); but ultimately sometimes on walls. Pausias, Nicias, and other painters who practised the first process, generally adopted this likewise. It is clear that, as the brush was used in this method, the wax must have been softened and dissolved in some other way than by heat, in order to fit it as a vehicle; for, merely melted by heat, although with friction serviceable as a varnish, it would cool much too rapidly for the application of the colors with the brush. But it is remarkable that, although the ancient mode of bleaching wax has been fully described by classic authors, no passage has been found which clearly describes the process of converting it into a vehicle for painting. From this uncertainty, innumerable controversies, theories, and experiments have arisen.

Pliny, we have seen, states that the third style of wax painting was first adopted for ships, and he adds that it was "proof against the sun's heat, the salt of the sea, and the winds." The common varnish for ships was, there is reason to believe, not pitch, but wax and resin, dissolved probably by an essential oil.† Although the word "zopissa" is used indifferently for pitch and comparatively light-colored resin. This varnish, more carefully prepared in order to render it as pale as possible, was, in all probability, the vehicle used, as it has the qualities enumerated by Pliny.

Experienced chemical analysis has proved that the colors of a mummy cloth had been mixed with pure wax, and it is concluded that the wax was held in solution by a volatile oil, such

as naphtha. We have seen, from the experiments of Professor Branchi, that in the Middle Ages the mordant for gilding was wax; and the chemist inclines to think it was dissolved in an essential oil, rather than a fixed drying oil. The same Professor ascertained that wax had been also used either with or over the colors as a varnish, in the early Pisan and Florentine pictures before the middle of the fourteenth century, and that from a resinous residuum it was probably dissolved by spirits of turpentine: wax was likewise used in coloring statues, and as a cement for mosaics. From a few passages in mediæval MSS., it appears that wax was also sometimes employed as a vehicle, and that its solution was effected by a *lixivium*, that is to say, by some agency which will allow the wax when ground, or in some other way united with the pigment, to be mixed with water. Potash and lime are mentioned as thus used, and a similar mode is still practised by the monks of Mount Athos, who retain many other Byzantine traditions. Alkaline reagents, which convert the pigments into a kind of soap, have had many modern advocates. No direct evidence in support of the employment of a *lixivium*, or the solution of wax by maceration, instead of its liquefaction by fire, can, however, be adduced from ancient authors. All that is distinctly mentioned is the solution of wax by means of heat in a fixed oil: walls and statues at least were certainly sometimes varnished with wax dissolved in olive oil, and afterwards polished by means of heat and friction, as already alluded to—the cloths removing the superfluous oil, as in the polishing of furniture at the present day.

The wax painting of antiquity was valued for its durability, resistance to moisture and ordinary heat, and the gloss of which it was susceptible. The last was a great recommendation to the ancients, especially when encaustic was employed not only for painting on panels, but for mural decoration; for the walls of their sumptuous apartments were very carefully stuccoed, and polished like mirrors. When painted and varnished, therefore, no lodgment was afforded for dust, and there was the utmost facility for cleaning the surface. Hence, upon the introduction of the larger style, wax painting was applied to ceilings, and, at a later period, even to the walls of baths. It is true that *tempera* pictures were varnished, and had consequently a shining surface, but not, perhaps, when *tempera* was employed for wall painting; and certainly we should venture to say the lime painting, either when *fresco* was employed alone—if ever it was so employed—or when it was combined with *tempera*, was not rendered superficially glossy. A higher quality, artistically speaking, was that the *pencillum encaustic* was susceptible of more depth, and richness, and therefore of more force, brilliancy of color, and gradation. And of this we are assured, that the later encaustic pictures were esteemed as much as the works of the great artists executed in the older methods notwithstanding that art was then declining. Yet encaustic never had entirely favorable conditions for the development and appreciation of its resources.

* Haydon says that it was then rubbed with wax candles, and finally with white napkins, till the polish was exquisite. His principal authority for this was probably the passage in Vitruvius, i vii. c. 9. But here the wax candles, *cum candelis linteisque puris*, are only mentioned as a cerate, or nearly colorless varnish for polishing walls.

† The ancients, though ignorant of the modern mode of distillation, were acquainted not only with naphtha, but with a method of obtaining the essential of turpentine.

In the present state of being, those things by which man is most ennobled, are the least generally bestowed. Air, light, food, are enjoyed by all. The distinctions of intellect are allotted with a more sparing hand; those of grace with still stricter limitation. What a happy circumstance would it be, if the most valuable gifts of heaven were as common as the meanest! if grace were universal as the light.—*Clulow.*